

Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, after attending a TV programme today (January 26):

Reporter: Are there any extra measures in the pipeline?

Secretary for Food and Health: I think our current public health measure is containment. After we have got our first confirmed case imported to Hong Kong, I think the important measure for us is really to contain these cases. Once we detect these cases, we will isolate them and try our best to treat them. So far, we are able to identify these suspected cases at the boundary, the Accident and Emergency Departments, as well as via referrals from private doctors successfully; and isolate them. After they have been in the isolated wards, the doctors of the Hospital Authority (HA) will assess their clinical conditions as well as to provide treatment as necessary.

Reporter: Some people think that measures put in place are not enough. They want to know if the number of cases is to rise, how to assure that it can be handled.

Secretary for Food and Health: The Chief Executive had already announced that, under the "Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance", we are now up to Emergency Response Level. The Government will be implementing a number of key measures. Many of those measures have already been started. Of course, we will be strengthening those measures. One of which is very important that we are strengthening our control at the boundary control points including temperature checking and implementing the Health Declaration Forms (system). Another important measure is to stop or cancel all mass gathering activities. This is also a medium for transmission of virus in case there is any virus (carrier participating in the activities). So it is also another important measure that we try to stop the transmission and try to lower the risk of transmission in the community. Of course, everybody in the community have to do something to increase their own personal hygiene awareness, such as wearing masks, maintaining hand hygiene as well as if they have any problems, such as feeling uncomfortable or having fever, they have to let the doctors know. Finally, we are also strengthening isolation facilities and contact tracing facilities of the Department of Health. Should there be more cases, we need more quarantine camps, we need more manpower for contact tracing, we also need more facilities to isolate these people. That is why the HA would not rule out the setting up of Designated Clinics. They are already well-prepared. Of course, at the Food and Health Bureau level and also at the Chief Executive level, different working groups and committees on different areas are working tirelessly every day. Finally, our colleagues meet the press every day. Today, it would be at 4.30pm and we try to stick to the same time every day. When we have got all details, for example, the cases you have just asked, we

will report back and let the public know during daily media briefings.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)